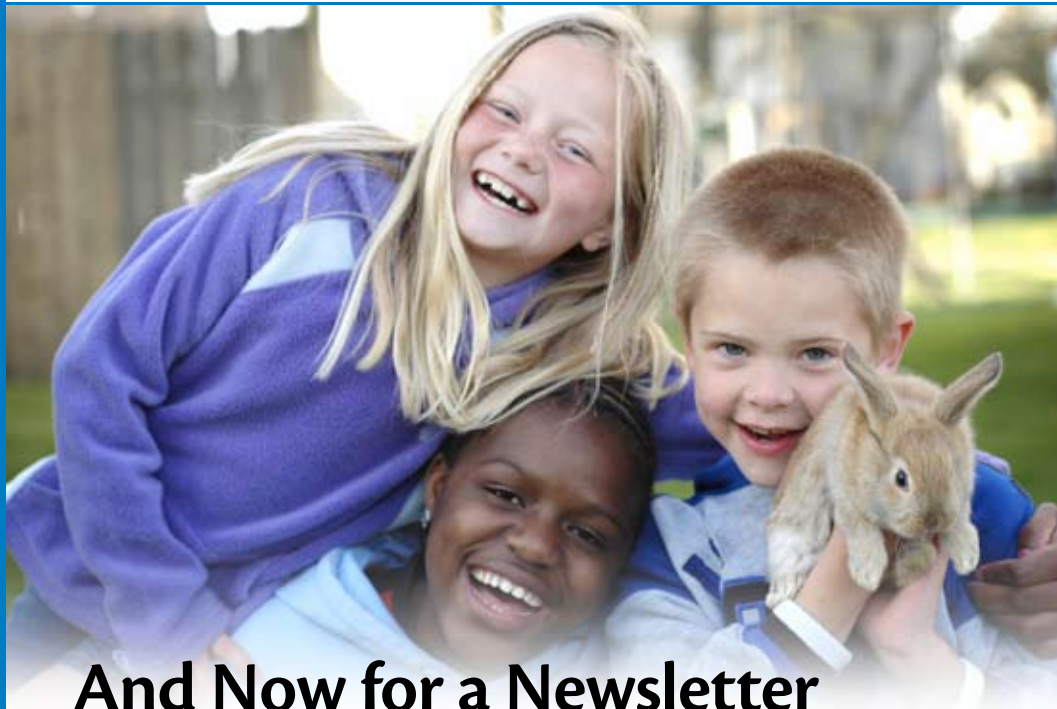


Caregiver Connection

August 2008

A monthly publication for Washington state foster and adoptive families and relative caregivers



And Now for a Newsletter That's Completely Different

You probably noticed this newsletter looks a little different than the ones you have been receiving for the past few years. It is, and that is because of the input from foster parents who contributed their time and creative ideas to the new *Caregiver Connection*.

Welcome to your first edition of the new DSHS Children's Administration newsletter for substitute caregivers in Washington state. The *Caregiver Connection* is, as the sub-title aptly states, a monthly publication for Washington state foster and adoptive families and relative caregivers.

It is our hope that you will find this publication relevant and useful as well as inviting and upbeat and that you will help us fill the pages with information that is meaningful to you and your family.

With this edition, the newsletter now includes circulation to adoptive families who have brought foster children into their forever families and who, along with other temporary and permanent caregivers, continue to do the vital work of caring for vulnerable children. This newsletter will now go to about 10,500 families every month.

We will continue to include important information about regional contacts and upcoming events. In addition, we hope to include regular features such as snapshots of specific families. In this edition, you'll meet the Martins, who have fostered more than 30 children and brought three of them into their "forever" family.

We welcome your ideas for feature stories, information about family events in your area. Brag about your kids' successes; tell us your family's story, let us know if there is a social worker or other staff member who has made a positive impact in your life; send in helpful hints for busy families; drop a piece of your kid's art in the mail, tell us what you would like to see in this publication, make this your *Caregiver Connection*.

This newsletter is your opportunity to connect with other caregivers, access resources, and celebrate your successes.

To contribute to the *Caregiver Connection*, send information to Michael Luque at lumi300@dsht.wa.gov.

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The Martins from left to right:
Jeremy, Kenny, Yuko, Erik, Juan,
Judy and Bryan

Meet the Martins

The Martins had a good life. Jerry had a great job at Boeing and was active on the ski patrol, they owned a home in the suburbs, and their children were growing up and moving out. When their youngest child, Bryan, was in high school, Judy found herself feeling bored. Jerry jokingly told her to “get a life.” She considered going back to work but didn’t want to work nights and weekends. She laughs about that now. She thought about what she was good at, which was being a mom. Judy decided she wanted to be a foster mom to babies with medical needs. Over the years the Martins have had more than 30 children in their home and three of those babies “just stuck around.” Thirteen-year-old Juan, 11-year-old Erik, and 5-year-old Kenny keep their parents plenty busy. Jerry and Judy’s daughter is married and has two children of her own. Bryan is a firefighter who frequents the Martin home and is a role model to the younger boys. Yuko is an international student living with the Martins. Judy is anything but bored these days. Judy said the hardest part about being a foster parent is saying “no” to children who need a home. She also says it’s embarrassing when strangers say things like “oh those kids are lucky to have you,” right in front of the kids. She thinks that their family is pretty lucky to have those kids. The Martins say that the best part is that it’s just fun! She and Jerry talk in those rare moments of quiet and the thing they ask is, “do you realize what our lives would be like without them?” Jerry and Judy found a way to enrich their own lives while providing a better life to some pretty amazing kids.

You can too.

Foster Parent Training Policy Update from the Children’s Administration, Division of Licensed Resources

Children’s Administration (CA) has revised the policy to meet the foster parent training requirements. We hope that some of these changes will make it easier for you to meet the requirements.

As of June 2008, the 36 hours of required training can be met by:

- Training offered by Children’s Administration
- In person
- Online at www.dshs.wa.gov/ca/fosterparents/training.asp
- Conferences and trainings related to child welfare
- Foster parent certification programs offered by Pierce or Seattle Central Community College
- CA approved private agency training courses
- Other training approved by the licenser

The 36-hour training requirement may be met by one or both people on a license, in any combination. That is:

- One person on a two-parent license may complete all 36 hours
- Two people on a two-parent license may combine their training hours to complete the 36-hour requirement (for example, one foster parent can complete 4 hours of training and the other could complete 32 hours of training)
- Training hours above the 36-hour requirement in the three-year licensing period are not carried over into the next licensing period. For example, if foster parents completed 42 training hours in their three year licensing period, the extra 6 hours beyond the 36 hours are not applied to the next three year licensing period.
- Children’s Administration wants foster parents to be successful and will work with you to meet the training requirements. However, if licensed foster parents do not complete the training requirement of 36 hours in the three-year period prior to relicensing, the licenser will:
 1. Create a compliance plan that requires the training to be completed within six months, and
 2. If the compliance plan is not met, the licenser will issue a stop placement on the home until the training requirement is met.
 3. If the foster parents still do not complete the training requirements, their foster home license may be revoked.

Children’s Administration welcomes you to attend additional training. Please let us know if there is any training that would be helpful to you in your work with foster children.

Thank you for your devotion to improving the lives of children in foster care.

Contact Robbie Downs, Foster Care Licensing Program Manager, at 360-902-8005 (doro300@dshs.wa.gov) with questions about the policy. Your licenser can help you find local training opportunities.



Children Will Be Returning to School Soon

Are you prepared to advocate for your children's education?

How caregivers can participate effectively in IEP meetings.
For complete details go to fosterparents@listserv.wa.gov.

Developmental Checklist for Young Children

This resource on child development can be given to the child's caregivers and caseworkers to improve understanding of healthy development and to look for signs of problems.

This checklist is designed for you to record the child's growth and development. There is space to fill in the age when the child begins each activity.

When you fill in the checklist, remember that each child develops at his or her own pace. The age listed on the

checklist is the time a number of children are consistently doing the activity.

If the child is not doing one activity at the age listed, there is probably no need to be concerned. However, if the child is late in doing several activities, you should discuss it with the child's doctor.

If the child was born prematurely, ask the doctor about the child's corrected developmental age.

For a copy of the checklist and complete details go to fosterparents@listserv.wa.gov.

What's the SETuP?

The new Supplemental Education Transition Planning program (SETuP) provides information to youth, foster families, and school staff about post-high school education and training opportunities for youth in foster care.

Contracted SETuP providers in your region can help young people get SETuP for college by offering:

- Financial Aid application assistance.
- Transportation and Housing information and assistance.
- College Application coaching and assistance.
- Pre-College Testing guidance based on educational goals.
- Course Planning to help achieve educational goals.
- Resource Links to programs and services especially for youth ages 14-18 in foster care.

How do I get my foster youth SETuP? for College Success

If you have a foster youth between the ages of 14 and 18 who are thinking about going to college...

Call: Jim Pritchard at 360-902-8487 for a provider near you.

Post Adoption **Support**

Welcome, Adoptive Families!

This is a new resource to help you stay informed about post adoption services. You will receive this publication monthly. Due to our limited space, we will need to condense information. It is our intent to provide you with up-to-date information based on questions that we have received from families.

Question: Who serves adoption support in my area?

Answer: See the map below for **Adoption Support Consultants*** and where the office is located.

Region 1 – Spokane

Jan Lammers* 509-363-3383
Pam Copeland* 509-363-3379

Region 2 – Yakima

Steve Bergland* 509-225 6500
Carol Cyr 509-225 6531
(Financial Specialist)

Region 3 – Monroe

Steve Foster* 360-805-3032
Linda Richardson* 360-805-3030

Region 4 – Bellevue

Aaron Washington* 425-590-3072
Jenne Norris 425-590-3069
(Social Worker)

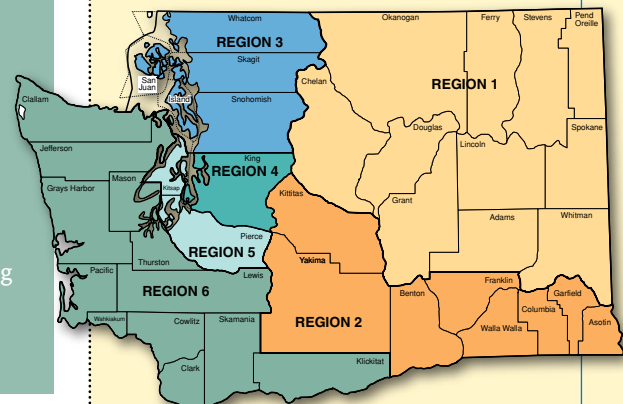
Region 5 – Tacoma

Cindy Anderson* 253-983-6359
Laura Davis* 253-983-6281

Region 6 – Tumwater

Cheryl Barrett* 360-725-6758
Kim Mower* 360-725-6778

Toll free number: 1-800-562-5682
(listen carefully to the recorded message)



Important numbers to know when you take care of children in out-of-home care

Foster Parent and Caregiver Crisis and Support Line: 1-800-301-1868

ON-GOING AND CRISIS SUPPORTS FOR FOSTER PARENTS

Under contracts with the state, three private agencies are working to build supports for you within the foster care community. Supports include hubs, support groups, and matching new foster parents with veteran foster parents. To get connected:

- If you live in Eastern Washington, the Olympic Peninsula down through Pacific County or from Thurston County to Clark County, call 1-888-794-1794.
- If you live in King County, call 206-605-0664 and in any county from Snohomish County north, call 360-510-7601 or 360-863-6530.
- If you live in Pierce or Kitsap counties, call 253-473-9252.
- If you live in King County, the Friends of Youth CARE program provides short-term counseling, education and support to help you care for your most difficult children. 1-888-263-3457.

Family Help Line: 1-800-932-HOPE or www.parenttrust.org. The Family Help Line is a free, statewide training and referral line for the families of Washington state. Last year, the Family Help Line received more than 5,000 calls and requests for information. Calls can last up to 90 minutes and parents can call as often as needed.

Support for foster parents under investigation for allegations of abuse or neglect: Foster Parent Investigation Retention Support Team (FIRST) 253-219-6782. Monday through Saturday, 8:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m., or leave a message and receive a return call within 24 hours.

Foster Parent and Caregiver Crisis and Support Line: 1-800-301-1868

Mental Health Crisis Line Information: The crisis line telephone number for your county or region is available on the DSHS Mental Health Division website at: <http://www.dshs.wa.gov/mentalhealth/crisis.shtml>.

GENERAL FOSTER PARENT INFORMATION FOR THE STATE OF WASHINGTON

FPAWS: Foster Parent Association of Washington State, 1-800-391-CARE (2273) or www.fpaws.org. FPAWS is seeking new members and supporting foster parents in many ways, including referrals to local associations.

Kitsap and Pierce County information about becoming a foster parent or to receive foster parent support: Foster Care Resource Network, 253-473-9252. Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. or leave a message and receive a return call by the next business day.

RESOURCE INFORMATION AVAILABLE STATEWIDE

Get connected to information on resources in your area by calling 211 – a toll free number.

Children's Administration Foster Parent Website:

<http://www.dshs.wa.gov/ca/fosterparents/>

Children's Administration Foster Parent Training Website – Trainings are open to all licensed foster parents, licensed relative caregivers and unlicensed caregivers. For information about foster parent and caregiver training, check out:

<http://www.dshs.wa.gov/ca/fosterparents/training.asp>

CHILDREN'S ADMINISTRATION FOSTER CARE LISTSERV

Join the 400 people who have subscribed to the List Serve

<http://listserv.wa.gov/cgi-bin/wa?SUBED1=fosterparents&&A=1> for updated information on resources for the work you do in caring for children.

Family Planning Services are designed to help avoid unwanted or mistimed pregnancy and are available through your local Community Service Office (CSO). Each CSO has a full time Family Planning Nurse to help provide services to Medicaid eligible clients. There is also a Family Planning hotline number 1-800-770-4334.

Calendar of Upcoming Events

AUGUST

11–15 **5th Annual Northwest Native American Youth Leadership Summit**

Central Washington University, Ellensburg

Joan Banker

(joan.banker@k12.wa.us)

Denny Hurtado

(denny.hurtado@k12.wa.us)

360-725-6160

25–28 **2008 National Native American Research Conference on Health**

Red Lion on the River, Portland, Oregon (hosted by the Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board)

Luella Azule/NPAIHB

(lazuli@npaihb.org)

503-228-4185

www.npaihb.org

SEPTEMBER

21 **Northwest Indian Education Summit**

Wildhorse Casino/Resort, Pendleton, Oregon

Bev Youngman (bevy@ctsi.nsn.us)

(NOTE: This event was originally scheduled in May and postponed to September)

22–25 **Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians (ATNI)**

54th Annual ATNI Conference

Pendleton, Oregon

503-249-1443

www.atntribes.org

26th Annual Foster Parent and Caregiver Conference



Registration is now open if you would like to attend the 2008 Foster Parent and Caregiver Conference.

Register Online: www.fpcconference.com

Register by Mail: If you would like to register by mail contact Nikki Plaid at 206-782-5450

For registration information & inquiries contact Nikki Plaid at 206-782-5450 or email Nikki@mcwevents.com

Conference Fees:

Full Conference – (Includes conference fee, materials, activities, and meals): \$180.00

One day Conference – (Includes conference fee, materials, activities, and meals): \$90.00

Lodging: Lodging is available at select hotels for the government rate of \$70.00 per night plus taxes. Visit web-site or contact Nikki for listing.